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STATE DEPARTMENT ON THE HILL

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

**MORE DEPARTMENT
HEADLINES** 2

**SECRETARY'S PUBLIC
STATEMENTS** 3

RECENT RELEASES 3

**ON-LINE INFORMATION
RESOURCES** 4

**TRAVEL WARNINGS AND
TRAVEL ALERTS** 5

**LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS
BUREAU CONTACTS** 6

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Romania—20th Anniversary of the Fall of Communism: pg. 2
- 1,000th Visa Issued to Hague Adoptees: pg. 3
- Intercountry Adoption Information: pg. 5
- Iraq Weekly Status Report: pg. 5

CLIMATE CHANGE: A COMMON THREAT, A GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY



Remarks by President Obama at the UN Climate Change Conference, Dec. 18, Copenhagen: “[A]s the world's largest economy and as the world's second largest emitter, America bears our responsibility to address climate change, and we intend to meet that responsibility. That's why we've renewed our leadership within international climate change negotiations. That's why we've worked with other nations to phase out fossil fuel subsidies. That's why we've taken bold action at home....” [Full Text](#) / [Secretary Clinton's Remarks - Op-Ed](#) / [Climate Change Conference Site](#)

REMARKS ON THE HUMAN RIGHTS AGENDA FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Remarks by Secretary Clinton at Georgetown University, Dec. 14, Washington, D.C.: “Our human rights agenda for the 21st century is to make human rights a human reality, and the first step is to see human rights in a broad context. Of course, people must be free from the oppression of tyranny, from torture, from discrimination, from the fear of leaders who will imprison or ‘disappear’ them. But they also must be free from the oppression of want – want of food, want of health, want of education, and want of equality in law and in fact.” [Full Text](#) / [Fact Sheet](#) / [Video](#) / [Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor](#)



U.S.-NORTH KOREA DIALOGUE ON THE WAY FORWARD



Special Representative for North Korea Policy Ambassador Stephen Bosworth in remarks on December 16, Washington, D.C.: “[T]his trip to Pyongyang was the first senior-level encounter between the Obama Administration and the DPRK. As I said in Seoul and elsewhere on the road, I found that the talks were quite positive.... In particular, they accepted the importance of the Six-Party process and they accepted the critical role of the joint statement of principles of September 2005.” [Full Text](#) / [North Korea Info](#)

FIRST BILATERAL U.S.-SERBIA MEETING



Remarks by Secretary Clinton, pictured here with Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic of Serbia at the Department of State, Dec. 15, Washington, D.C.: “I’m very pleased to welcome the foreign minister of Serbia here. Vice President Biden had a very productive meeting last May in Belgrade. And we see continuing positive developments in our relationship with Serbia and we look forward to working with you and with your government on behalf of many matters of mutual concern.” [Full Text](#) / [Serbia Info](#)



Romania: 20th Anniversary of the Fall of Communism

Statement by Secretary Clinton, Dec. 17: “The United States is proud to call Romania a trusted friend and ally. On behalf of President Obama and the people of the United States, I congratulate the people of Romania on twenty years of democracy.” [Full Text](#) / [Romania Info](#)

U.S.-UAE AGREEMENT FOR PEACEFUL NUCLEAR COOPERATION

Under Secretary for Arms Control and International Security Ellen Tauscher (right) exchanges diplomatic notes with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) Ambassador to the U.S. (left), bringing into force the United States–UAE Agreement for Peaceful Nuclear Cooperation, Dec. 17, Washington, D.C. [Media Note](#) / [UAE Info](#)



LISBON TREATY: IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE U.S.-EU RELATIONS



Philip Gordon, Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs, delivers a statement before the Subcommittee on Europe of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, Dec. 15, Washington, D.C.: “It creates several new institutions, and strengthens other important ones.... The intention behind the establishment of these new positions and strengthened institutions is to guide the further evolution of the European Union toward a more consistent, coherent, and effective foreign policy.” [Full Text](#) / [Video](#)

Setting the Record Straight: No Justification for Piracy Off the Somalia Coast

Statement from the Department Spokesman’s Office, Dec. 17, Washington, D.C.:

“Pirates who prey on international shipping along the Horn of Africa and even more distant waters have claimed that their actions are motivated by illegal fishing in Somali waters. This is a spurious justification for criminal behavior.” [Full Text](#) / [Somalia Info](#) / [Bureau of Political-Military Affairs](#)

CAMBODIA’S FORCIBLE RETURN OF UIGHURS TO CHINA

Statement by Acting Department Spokesman Gordon Duguid, Dec. 19, Washington, D.C.: “On December 19, the Royal Government of Cambodia, at the request of China, forcibly removed a group of 20 Uighur asylum seekers back to China in apparent violation of Cambodia’s international obligations. The United States is deeply concerned about the welfare of these individuals, who had sought protection under international law.” [Full Text](#) / [Cambodia Info](#)



1,000TH VISA ISSUED TO HAGUE ADOPTEES



On December 10 the [U.S. Consulate General in Guangzhou, China](#) issued the 1,000th Hague adoption visa since the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention went into force for the United States on April 1, 2008. Hague Visas have been issued to children from 29 Convention partner countries to date. We have reached this mark only four months after reaching our last important milestone of 500 Hague visas. This exponential growth is the result of continued close coordination among Department of State staff in Washington, D.C. and abroad as well as with the Department of Homeland Security and Central Authorities in Convention Partner countries. [More on Adoption.State.gov](#)

SECRETARY'S PUBLIC STATEMENTS

- [Release of Aminatou Haidar](#)
- [Remarks Following Bilateral with British Prime Minister Brown](#)
- [Defense Appropriations Bill](#)
- [Remarks at Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony for Public Diplomacy State Department Annex Building](#)
- [Bahrain National Day](#)
- [Qatar National Day](#)

[- More Statements-](#)

"I was pleased to hear of the government of Morocco's decision to re-admit Aminatou Haidar – a Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights Prize recipient – on humanitarian grounds following her month-long hunger strike in Spain. This humanitarian gesture is reflective of the true spirit and generosity of the Moroccan government and people, and underscores the urgency of finding a permanent solution to the Western Sahara conflict."

RECENT PRESS RELEASES

- [UN Again Calls on Iran to Address Serious Human Rights Violations](#)
- [Thirtieth Anniversary of the United Nations' Adoption of CEDAW](#)
- [Georgia: "Elections" in the Abkhazia Region of Georgia](#)
- [Nepal: Child Soldiers](#)
- [Burma: Kyaw Zaw Lwin Update](#)
- [Message on the Indictment of Chinese Activist Liu Xiaobo](#)
- [U.S. Funds Post-Conflict Clean-Up in Georgia](#)
- [Economic Partnership Dialogue Advances U.S.-Brazil Cooperation](#)

[— More Releases —](#)

DEPARTMENT ANNOUNCEMENTS



NATIONAL ADOPTION MONTH AND INTERCOUNTRY ADOPTION

Statement by Assistant Secretary Janice Jacobs, Bureau of Consular Affairs: “November was National Adoption Month, when hundreds of events were held around the country to finalize adoptions of children in foster care and to celebrate adoptive families.

Last year, families in the United States adopted over 12,500 children from around the world and more than 70,000 children domestically. U.S. citizens adopt more children internationally than the rest of the world combined. I believe this is a testament to the love and generosity of the American people.

The Department of State maintains country specific information about the intercountry adoption process for prospective adoptive parents, adoption service providers, and members of Congress. In addition, we work closely with other governments to promote ethical and transparent adoption laws and procedures.

In 2008, the United States demonstrated our commitment to help children in need around the world by becoming a party to the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention. This Convention establishes a framework for intercountry adoption by establishing international standards and procedures for processing intercountry adoption cases. The Convention mandates safeguards to protect the interests of children, birth parents and adoptive parents. Over 75 nations, including China and India, are party to the Hague Adoption Convention.

By joining the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention and implementing its requirements, the United States has taken an important step to promote ethical adoption programs around the world and to place the best interest of the child at the forefront of adoptions to or from the United States.

Through our role in the immigration process and as Central Authority under the Convention, the Department of State works hard to maintain standards and procedures that facilitate a permanent placement for every child adopted abroad by a U.S. family. In cooperation with other governments, we promote the present and future well-being of children who have been left vulnerable in foreign countries.

Every child deserves a loving home. As the U.S. Central Authority for the Hague Intercountry Adoption Convention, I am proud that the Department of State is an active member of the international adoption community. We strongly encourage other nations to join the Convention to ensure that, as the Convention’s preamble states, “... the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow up in a family environment, in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding.” For more information about intercountry adoption, please visit www.adoption.state.gov.”

INFORMATION RESOURCES

- [State Department Telephone Directory](#) and [Country Desk Officers](#)
- [Bureau of Consular Affairs Congressional Website](#)
- [U.S. Embassy Websites](#) and [Key Officers at Posts Abroad](#)
- [Consular Information Sheets](#) and [Background Notes](#)
- [Iraq Weekly Status Report](#)
- [Foreign Embassies and Consulates throughout the U.S.](#)
- [United States Agency for International Development \(USAID\)](#)

The Legislative Affairs Bureau provides courier service twice a day between Capitol Hill and the State Department. Correspondence for the Secretary of State and other State Department officials may be dropped off at the State Department Liaison Office (Rayburn B-330), or on the Senate side in the drop box in Dirksen 423 for pickup.

DEPARTMENT NOTICES

TRAVEL ALERT: INDIA

The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens to the possibility of violence as Andhra Pradesh continues to experience civil unrest. A demonstration is planned for December 10, and there is the potential that episodic clashes between the police and protesters will spark wider unrest in the city of Hyderabad. [Full Text](#)

TRAVEL ALERT: NIGER

The Department of State alerts U.S. citizens to the risks of travel to Niger due to threat of kidnapping, and recommends against all travel to Niger at this time. This Travel Alert expires February 28, 2010. [Full Text](#)

TRAVEL ALERT: PHILIPPINES

The State Department alerts U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to the southern Philippine islands of Mindanao and the Sulu Archipelago and urges extreme caution if traveling there. This Travel Alert expires on January 6, 2010. [Full Text](#)

TRAVEL WARNING: CHAD

The Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of traveling to Chad and recommends that American citizens avoid all travel to eastern Chad and the Chad/Central African Republic border area. [Full Text](#)

TRAVEL WARNING: MALI

The Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of travel to Mali and continues to recommend against all travel to the north of the country due to kidnapping threats against Westerners. This replaces the Travel Warning for Mali dated August 31, 2009, to update security and threat information. [Full Text](#)

TRAVEL WARNING: MAURITANIA

The U.S. Department of State warns U.S. citizens of the risks of traveling to Mauritania, and urges extreme caution when traveling there due to increased activities by the terrorist group Al Qaeda in the Islamic Maghreb (AQIM). [Full Text](#)

TRAVEL WARNING: SRI LANKA

The Department of State warns U.S. citizens about the risks of travel to Sri Lanka due to continued security concerns, especially in the northernmost areas and most of its Eastern Province, as there are still uncleared landmines and potential for incidents by remnant members of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE). [Full Text](#)

Please visit <http://travel.state.gov> for additional information pertaining to travel-related announcements, passports, visas and other issues.

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PLEASE VISIT US ON THE WEB: WWW.STATE.GOV/S/H

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*Please pass this along to your friends and colleagues on the Hill. Feedback to
SchamingJ@state.gov is welcome and encouraged.*

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